

Southeast News

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

VOLUME 33

MARCH, 1982

NUMBER 2



REV. WOLFGANG C. KOEHLER

Koehler Installed As Fairfield Glade Pastor

Rev. Wolfgang C. Koehler was installed by the Alabama-Tennessee Association on January 31, 1982 as pastor and teacher of the Fairfield Glade Community Church, located in Fairfield Glade, TN.

A new church start jointly sponsored by the United Church of Christ and the United Presbyterian Church, Fairfield Glade completed and dedicated its first building in 1981. Rev. Koehler, while the church's second minister, is the first full-time, resident minister to serve the church.

A graduate of Mission House College and Mission House Seminary, both in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Rev. Koehler was ordained in 1949. He comes to Fairfield Glade following a 14 year pastorate at St. John's United Church — membership 1,667 — in Monroe, Wisconsin. Rev. Koehler and his wife, Betty, have two children, Erich (30) and Matthew (24).

Attending the Installation Service were over 190 members and visitors including denominational representatives from the Presbyterian Church, USA and the Alabama-Tennessee Association and Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Members of the Fairfield Glade Church, coming from about seven different denominations, covenanted with Rev. Koehler to follow his deepest theological view that "Christianity is a faith to be

UCC Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The 25th Anniversary of the United Church of Christ will be celebrated throughout 1982. In response, Dr. Avery Post, President of the United Church, writes: "As we celebrate the 25th birthday of the United Church of Christ in 1982, I hope that we will be preoccupied chiefly with the grace of God. We look back to appraise the pilgrimage of our United Church and to meet our mothers and fathers in acts of thanksgiving and memory.

"In all of that, we sense the grace of God. We are extraordinarily conscious not only of the present life and mission of our beloved United Church, but of our utter dependency on the grace of God.

"Throughout this year, we will be scanning the next decade as well as developing plans, and will see that the grace coming to meet us from God's future is indeed the grace that will lead us on.

"I call you to a lively and joyous celebration of the first 25 years of the United Church of Christ . . . celebrations that not only contemplate the mission of God, but renew commitment to the gracious God of Jesus Christ."

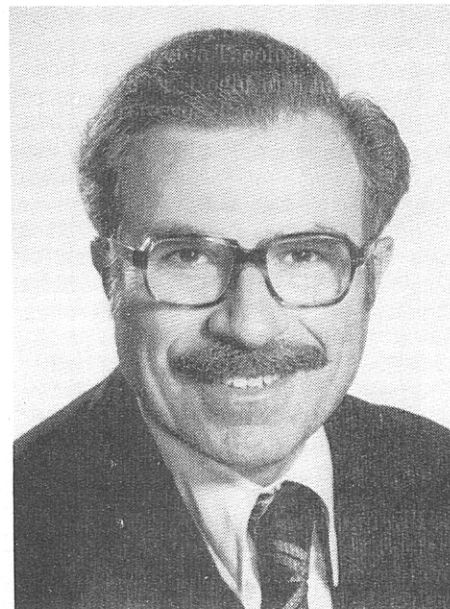
Conference Ministers Urge Disarmament

In a strongly-worded Ash Wednesday message, 38 conference ministers of the United Church of Christ have called their constituents to "public witness" against the arms race and urged the U.S. Government to take "unilateral first steps toward disarmament among the nations."

"The potential for disaster is everywhere," the pastoral letter charges, when "weapons of terrible force occupy the heavens above, the earth below and the waters under the earth." Declaring that "the existence of such weapons is contrary to the will of God," the conference ministers asserted: "We must resist them

(Continued on Page 3)

lived in humility and love; not a creed or dogma to be argued."



REV. DR. PETER B. DOGHGRAMJI

Doghramji Convocation Speaker

The Rev. Dr. Peter B. Doghramji will be the speaker at the 1982 Southeast Conference Ministers' and Spouses' Convocation, to be held Monday through Wednesday, May 3-5 at St. Bernard Abbey, Cullman, AL.

Dr. Doghramji, an outstanding Bible scholar and teacher, will be leading three sessions of Bible study, the general theme of which is entitled "The Completeness of God." Sessions will deal with the parables, the signs and the images of Jesus.

An Assistant to the Conference Minister of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference since 1979, Dr. Doghramji served for the previous nine years as pastor of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church, UCC in Philadelphia.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, he is a graduate of the American University of Beirut and of the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon. He earned a Th.M. in Theology at Harvard Divinity School and a Ph.D. in Ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Since 1978 Dr. Doghramji has served as Adjunct Professor, Lancaster, PA Theolo-

(Continued on Page 4)

CONFERENCE CORNER

Rev. Stephen C. Gray

Is your church a growing church? In the past this question has met some resistance in the Southeast Conference. Some would say: It's hard to attract new members in the south. Others would say: we have an identity crisis, no one knows who we are. And finally there was the comment: church growth is not important.

But comments to the contrary, church growth is important. And not only is church growth important, but it can happen. And not only can church growth happen, but we can make it happen!

How can we make it happen? A good place to start is with the new resource published by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, entitled: **Evangelism & Membership Growth Resources**, available from Church Leadership Resources, 1400 N. Seventh St., St. Louis, MO 63106. Cost of the resource is \$12.00.

This new resource shows how rural, as well as urban, churches can plan strategies to reach into their congregations and create excitement from which they can reach out to persons in the community who are looking for a church community like the United Church has to offer.

Is your church a growing church? Help your church to know the excitement of answering YES!

Caravan Camping Trip Planned

A Caravan Camping trip is being planned by the Southern Alabama Area, UCC and is open for participation by youth — and adults — from all the churches in the Southeast Conference.

To be held in Morgan and Scott Counties, Tennessee, June 19-26, 1982, participants will be involved in a number of activities. In addition to visiting the World's Fair in Knoxville, three days will be spent in building a home through the Appalachia Habitat for Humanity program. In addition, participants will also have an opportunity to tour Uplands Retirement Center and worship at a number of the area churches.

Cost for the trip is \$40.00 (bring your sleeping bag and tent). Cost to attend the World's Fair is an additional \$9.95 for one day.

Mail advance registrations to: Mrs. Betty Moon, Route 1, Box 25, Wadley, AL 36276. Please enclose the \$40.00 fee. Checks should be made payable to "Caravan Camping."

Conference Calendar

- April 3 — NICD Training, Andalusia, AL.
— Christian Education Commission
- April 4 — Palm Sunday
- April 8 — Maundy Thursday
- April 9 — Good Friday, SEC office closed
- April 11 — Easter Sunday
- April 18 — Oak Grove Barbecue, Pine Mountain, GA
- April 23 — Uplands Board of Directors
- April 23-25 — SEC Women's Spring Retreat, Camp Calvin, GA
— Ala-Tenn Youth Work Weekend at Morgan-Scott Project
— Southern Alabama Area spring Mini-Camp, Laguna Beach, FL
- April 25 — ICCOCP Meeting, Nashville churches
- May 3-5 — SEC Ministers & Spouses Convocation, St. Bernard's Abbey, Cullman, AL
- May 9 — Festival of the Christian Home Sunday
- May 14-16 — JED Teacher Education Event, Memphis, TN
- May 20 — Ascension Day
- May 28 — Uplands Board of Directors
- May 30 — Pentecost Sunday

Memphis Site of Education Event

Joint Educational Development (JED), in which the United Church of Christ is a partner with ten other denominations, is sponsoring a teacher education event in Memphis, May 14-16.

This event in Memphis is one of many such teacher training events to be held across the country over the next two years. The purpose of the events is to reaffirm and sharpen the efforts of congregations committed to the purpose of Christian Education: Shared Approaches (CE:SA).

In these multi-denominational events regional leaders will be trained to conduct spin-off conferences in selected cities and towns in their region. The Alabama and Tennessee churches are designated for Memphis; Georgia and South Carolina will have their regional events next February in Charlotte, N.C.

The Southeast Conference trainees and sites of their respective spin-off conferences are Ellen Bergman from the United Church of Huntsville — Huntsville; Kathy Russell from Chattanooga, Pilgrim-Knoxville; Glynnis Hughes from Nashville, Howard — Nashville. The spin-off conference dates will be announced later.

UCBHM Makes Policy

Statement

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, meeting in Memphis, TN on January 31 made the following policy statement on cuts in governmental programs for the needy:

Most Americans now recognize the urgent need to address with utmost diligence and intelligence the serious plight of the nation's economy, and many recognize the awesome complexity of doing so. There seems to be less conviction, however, that solutions to the economy's plight should not put any additional burden on the destitute and those living on the ragged edge of poverty by virtue of circumstances beyond their control.

Indeed, some of the destitute need even greater assistance than they are now receiving. It is the duty of the Christian community to intensify its own efforts to aid the needy, to encourage others to do so, and to call on government at all levels to rectify laws, regulations, administrative procedures and budget cuts that cause undue and unjust suffering to the most impoverished members of our society; the majority are women, many of whom are elderly, and children.

Accordingly, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, which is responsible for ministries within the nation, hereby urges National Instrumentalities, Conferences, Associations, Congregations and individual members of the United Church of Christ:

(1) To analyze their own programs for assisting the needy and to make them more effective wherever possible;

(2) To increase the degree of coordination among voluntary agencies concerned with aiding the needy so as to minimize duplicate effort, close unnecessary gaps, and increase the actual aid rendered to the private sector;

(3) To protest to elected representatives and responsible government officials those cuts in government spending and program modifications which reduce the availability of food, housing, medical care and other essential services for the truly needy; and

(4) To point out that the existing and proposed cuts in Federal spending greatly exceed whatever additional assistance the private sector might provide to the needy.



PART OF THE 200 people gathered for the 75th Anniversary of Elon Home for Children.

Elon Home Celebrates 75th Anniversary

Elon Home for Children, located at Elon College, N.C., began its 75th anniversary celebration January 28, 1982 by honoring the 1300 children who have received care in the Home and by ensuring care for children and their families in the future.

Exactly 75 years to the day after Lela May Canada became the first child to enter the Elon Home, a special endowment fund was announced to the 200 people gathered in the McFarland Activities Building on the campus. This fund was dedicated to the memory of Lela Mae Canada, and will underwrite the Home's services to children and their families through a permanently endowed position of a family services worker. The first donation was made by the staff with 100 percent participation and totalled \$1,000.

Speaker for the anniversary was Dr. Avery Post of New York City, President of the United Church of Christ. He had praise not only for the Elon Home, its leadership and staff, but also for the ministry of caring, not just for individuals but for one another. The ministry of Jesus, he said, "was focused on people. The same is true with the Home as its work is based on faithfulness and its focus is on hurt and vulnerable people."

Other events in the 75th anniversary year are: March 27, Elon College Community Day; May, visitation of churches on the campus; June 5-6, Alumni Weekend; November, Board of Directors and child care agencies planning for the future.

Dr. Walstein W. Snyder is the Executive Director of the Elon Home for Children. W.J. Andes

Mission Questions — Mission Answers

Do you know where you can get answers to your questions about overseas mission in the United Church of Christ?

One place is the NEWS INFO LINE

Ministries. Just dial 1-212-870-3257 for an updated report on what our denomination is doing in the world today.

Another place for answers is the **Annual Report and World Calendar of Prayer**, published by UCBWM. Listing facts and figures about countries overseas, featuring colorful profiles of UCC missionaries, and highlighting up-to-date descriptions of services and institutions related to the UCC, this publication is a **must** for churches interested in overseas mission. This resource is available for \$1 from: UCBWM, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115.

Peace - Cont'd.

with all our strength or deny our vocation as Christians."

Conference Ministers oversee the work of the United Church's regional and state bodies. The letter was sent to 6,340 churches with 1.75 million members.

Support for peace and rejection of nuclear war is part of the Christian faith, the ministers explained. The church is asked, they contended, "not to have peace, but to make peace; not merely to lip service, but to public service, to bear witness in our day to the radical commitment of God to the earth and all its peoples and to the divine insistence on the just and sane use of all the world's resources."

Urging redistribution of resources from arms to human needs, the letter notes: "Weapons starve the poor. Where Christ is present, the poor are fed."

The United Church leaders also asked for a halt to the "suicidal building" of nuclear and chemical weapons.

"We write to you in faith and with a sense of our common calling; with hope and a concern for the future of the world; out of love and the belief that God continues to summon us to the ministry of reconciliation," the letter states. "We join our voices with those of our sisters and brothers in the churches in the East and the West, the North and the South."

At the last General Synod, peace was voted as one of the two main priorities of the denomination for the next four years.



W.J. ANDES, former SEC Conference Minister and now on staff at Elon Home for Children, at the 75th Anniversary reception.

Ladies Night Enjoyed

The East Alabama Association's Annual Ladies Night was held February 20th at Southern Union College. There were about 200 in attendance. The conference minister, Emmett O. Floyd was a guest.

The speaker for the evening was Bob Stevens of Habitat For Humanity in Americus, Ga.

Humorous games and prizes were a part of the evening's entertainment. The doorprize was the title to an "MG" sports car. There was no car, just a title; the car had been wrecked several weeks before and was in the junk yard if the winner could find it.

A good time was had by all.

Love and Prayer

"Love and prayer...are not mere nice words; they are the names of tremendous powers, able to transform...human personality and make it more and more that which it is meant to be...the agent of the Holy Spirit in the world."

Evelyn Underhill

Doghramji - Cont'd.

gical Seminary. He is fluent in five languages and has reading knowledge in Greek, Hebrew, German and Syriac.

Cost for the Convocation will be \$45.00 per person, which covers two nights' lodging with linens and towels provided

Committee on Disabilities / Handicapped Meets

The National Committee on the Church and Persons with Disabilities — Handicaps met in New York City January 15-16.

Besides a staff member from each national agency, the committee was joined by a carefully chosen individual from each UCC region who has agreed to work with the committee. These representatives have consented to work to strengthen contacts throughout the regions, produce a stronger and more active network in the Conferences and Associations and to build strong task forces.

The goals of the task forces will be to assist local churches in removing both architectural and attitudinal barriers toward persons with disabilities and welcome them and their families into the life and work of each local church.

The representative for the Mid-Atlantic Region is: The Rev. Richard Pulling, 53 Wyman Avenue, Huntington Station, NY 11746

Abortion Subject of Consultation

Acknowledging that the abortion controversy "is not going to go away" and "freedom of choice is not a reality," over 50 leaders in the United Church of Christ began work on a more comprehensive approach to the issue in a 3-day consultation held recently in New York City.

While praising the denomination's General Synods for their early and consistent stands in favor of a woman's right to decide to continue or terminate a pregnancy, speakers stressed the need for a stronger theological base to counter "pro-life" postures and greater analysis of the economic and social underpinnings of a "pro-choiced" stance.

The Rev. Dr. Roger Shinn, Reinhold Niebuhr professor of social ethics at Union Theological Seminary, accused his fellow religious abortion rights proponents of defending their position in a way that "reflects individualism which derives from the Enlightenment and not from the Christian faith." Noting that United Church bodies have been opposed to freedom of choice when it comes to segregation or the busing of public school students to achieve integration, he called for more discussion of "why the Church wants to restrict some freedoms and enlarge others."

The Rev. Dr. Beverly Harrison, a professor of Christian Ethics at Union, stressed the justice issue when she said, "Much of the theological and moral defense of abortion is predicated on the belief that most women have freedom-of-choice conditions and those conditions are being revoked. We must understand that safe elective surgical abortion is assured to only a few women who are largely white and largely affluent."

Proposals raised by attendees and speakers at the consultation included clergy training to help ministers counsel women on family planning and pregnancy decisions, dialogues between women of color and white women in the UCC to deal with questions of abortion and forced sterilization, church sponsorship of debates between anti-abortion and pro-choice leaders and continued work on the theology which underlies the issue.

Others attending the consultation included UCC president Avery Post, Riverside Church senior pastor William Sloan Coffin, and OCIS director, Rev. Yvonne Delk.



FAIRFIELD GLADE INSTALLATION PARTICIPANTS: Rev. David Campbell, Mrs. Barbara Everett, Rev. James Mays, Rev. Walter Hall, Rev. and Mrs. Koehler, and Dr. Emmett Floyd.

Focus On New Immigrants

Most of the history of the United States is based on immigrants; the earliest settlers were immigrants from Europe. For the past two centuries, the United States has continued to receive immigrants from every corner of the world — sometimes with open arms, sometimes not.

In recent years, the flood of people to our shores from Cuba, Mexico, Haiti, Vietnam, Chile, and other countries has increased dramatically. These people are the subject of Thomas Bentz's moving new book, *New Immigrants: Portraits in Passage*.

Bentz, a United Church of Christ minister, shows with devastating clarity the struggles of these immigrants as they try to adapt to a new way of life in the United States. The book is available for \$6.95 from: Office for Church in Society, P.O. Box 179, St. Louis, MO. 63166.

Results of Mass Poverty

"History has taught us that wars produce hunger, but we are less aware that mass poverty can lead to war or end in chaos. While hunger rules peace cannot prevail. One who wants to ban war must also ban mass poverty. Morally it makes no difference whether a human being is killed in war or is condemned to starve to death because of the indifference of others."

The Common Lot

The Southeast News

Second Class Postage Paid at
Atlanta, Georgia 30359

Publication Number 504480

Published monthly October and
November; February to July, inclusive;
bi-monthly August-September and
December-January, by and for
the churches of the

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
The United Church of Christ

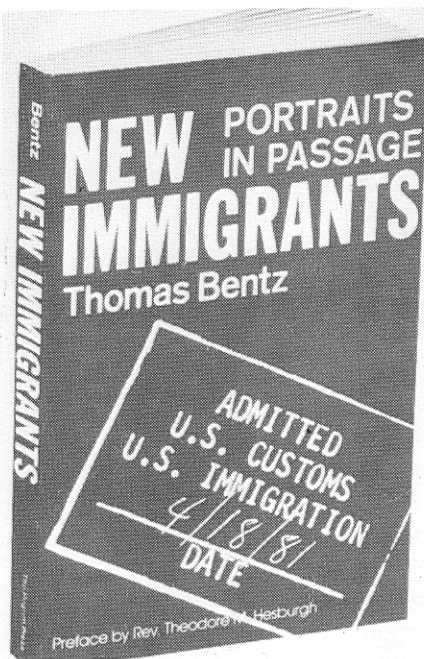
2676 Clairmont Rd., Atlanta, Ga. 30329
Telephone (404) 633-5655

Subscription Rate — \$2.00 Per Year

Printed by The Roanoke Leader
Roanoke, Alabama

Vol. 33 March, 1982 No. 2

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to
P.O. Box 29833, Atlanta, Ga. 30359



Scholarship Fund Winners Announced

When the Van Cleavees were retired from Southern Union College, the alumni set up and contributed to a Van Cleave Scholarship Fund. It was understood that scholarships would be granted only to very special young people. Each would need to attain high scholarship and distinctive leadership in high school but would also need to share greatly in church and community activities.

It will interest many to know that on this basis, one those selected this year was Miss Melissa Moon, graduate of Handley High School of Roanoke, and daughter of Mrs. Betty Moon. The latter is well known in the East Alabama Association through her work there, especially in the youth program. The two are members of the Rock Stand Congregational Christian Church, UCC.

Also receiving a scholarship this year is Mike Chapman of Newell, a graduate of Woodland High School. Both of these recipients are on the Dean's list, have been elected to Phi Theta Kappa, the honor fraternity in junior colleges, and both are on the Phi Theta "College Bowl" team which won the state championship.

A.R. Van Cleave

Who Is More Dangerous?

"Who is more dangerous to society and who is less likely to go to prison — the kid from the wrong side of the tracks who robs a filling station at night...or the corporate executive who knows that the toxic wastes from his firm are being disposed of in a way which will poison all the water wells in the area?"

from LINKAGE

25th Anniversary Resources Available

The Division of Publication of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries will publish several resources in 1982 in observance of the 25th anniversary of the United Church of Christ.

A revised and expanded version of *The United Church of Christ: History and Program* will become available in April. This new edition, expanded from 48 pages to 64 pages, will contain both the original and the new versions of the UCC Statement of Faith. The new version of the Statement of Faith has been approved by the Executive Council for use in 25th anniversary celebrations.

Other resources that have been revised to include the new version of the Statement of Faith are the Certificates of Church Membership, Order of Confirmation, and Confirmation. Copies of these certificates containing the original version of the Statement of Faith remain available.

A presentation Bible intended especially for use by members of the United Church will be published in June. It will include the new Statement of Faith and an abridged version of *Who We Are, What We Believe*. The United Church emblem will be embossed on the cover.

These resources, and many others, are described in a brochure available from the Order Department, Division of Publication, UCBHM, 132 West 31st Street, New York, NY. 10001. Ordering information is included in the brochure.

Peace Forum Held

Over 30 people were in attendance to discuss the General Synod's peace priority at a forum held February 20 by the Outreach Commission of the Alabama-Tennessee Association.

Meeting at Knoxville Church of the Savior, UCC, persons representing nearly all the churches in the Knoxville cluster watched the film "War Without Winners," which depicts the dangers and futility of nuclear war.

Following the film, a panel addressed the issue of peace, especially as it applied to the UCC peace priority. Opinions expressed ranged from advocacy for total pacifism to support for a strong military defense.

Participants then met in small groups to discuss how individuals and churches can work for peace.

NEWS & NOTES

The interim minister for the Crossville, TN, UCC is Rev. Harley Patterson. Holding his standing with the Disciples of Christ, Rev. Patterson's address is P.O. Box 106, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578.

The 1981 OCWM contribution for Braselton, Macedonia Church, printed in the February issue of the *Southeast News*, was incorrect. The correct figure should have read \$400.00.

The church nursery of Button Gwinnett UCC, Lilburn, GA, is undergoing a "population explosion." Two nursery groups will be required instead of just one!

Mr. John S. Fandrich Sr., a leading member of Belvidere, TN, United Church of Christ, was recently named Franklin County's "Outstanding Citizen" for 1981. Mr. Fandrich has been a leader in a wide spectrum of community and church efforts for over half a century.

Ms. Glynnis Hughes, a member of Howard UCC in Nashville, will represent the Ala.-Tenn. Association at the JED Teacher Training event to be held this May in Memphis.

"Have Heater — Will Worship" was the slogan of Button Gwinnett UCC members who were invited to bring an electric heater to worship to help counter the effects of a February cold snap.

February 19, 1982 was the 50th anniversary of the burning of Wesley Hall, a building which provided housing at Vanderbilt Divinity School. Vividly remembering the fire, since it destroyed all of their worldly goods, were former residents of Wesley Hall — Joe French, David Shepherd, and Pauline and Arnold Slater.



AMERICAN INDIAN CHILDREN as pictured in THE UCC AT WORK: IN THE U.S.A.

Rev. John Mickle, who is retiring as minister of Second Congregational Church, UCC in Memphis, TN, was recently honored at a retirement dinner held on behalf of him and his wife. The Mickles will be retiring in Chattanooga.

The UCC's William Sloane Coffin, senior minister of Riverside Church, New York, was named the fifth most influential person in religion in the U.S. in a survey recently published by *The Christian Century*.

Dr. Marvin Morgan, pastor of First Congregational UCC in Atlanta and the Rev. Joseph Irwin, pastor of Button Gwinnett UCC in Lilburn, held a pulpit exchange on February 14.

Dr. David Beebe, pastor of Chattanooga Pilgrim UCC and the Rev. Wilson Welch, pastor of Howard UCC, Nashville, will be representing the Southeast Conference at the Annual Meeting of the Christian Church of Tennessee (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Memphis April 25-27, 1982.

Missionaries in the USA

"Mission" might immediately bring to mind overseas missionaries, but "mission" is just as much a part of our church's work here in the United States.

Glimpses of our denomination's mission and ministry in our own country are found in *The United Church of Christ at Work: In the U.S.A.*, a new photo-essay pamphlet published by the Stewardship Council. An overview of the work of national instrumentalities and agencies, plus sharp photographs and concise explanations of many UCC programs, are found in this new resource.

The United Church of Christ at Work: In the U.S.A. is available free, in any quantity, from: Stewardship Council Distribution Service, United Church of Christ, 1505 Race Street, Room 618, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Curt's Nuggets

From the desk of Curtis Schumacher, Pleasant Hill, TN: Only God can say, "This is mine."

THE SOUTHEAST NEWS
P. O. Box 29883
Atlanta, Georgia 30359

Second Class Postage Paid
at Atlanta, Ga.